LARSON SUPPORTS TWO EDUCATION BILLS THAT MOVE OUT OF HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 8, 2001

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WASHINGTON,D.C.—U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) today announced his strong support of two education bills that were moved out of the House Science Committee's Subcommittee on Research on Thursday. H.R. 1858, National Mathematics and Science Partnerships Act, sponsored by Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (NY-23) and H.R. 100, the National Science Education Act, sponsored by Vernon Ehlers (MI-03) both passed through Subcommittee markup. The bills are intended to improve science education in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The legislation encourages academic institutions and businesses to apply their resources to the challenges of pre-college math and science education.

"Partnering public schools and the private sector is a critical component in improving education," said Larson. "Our students and teachers must have a solid base of knowledge in science, mathematics, and technology in order to maintain American's global leadership in defense, industry and innovation. We cannot allow a generation of Americans to move ahead without the skills they need to compete in the global market. I am also very pleased to see this legislation move along with strong bi-partisan support."

H.R. 1858 establishes awards to institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations that have entered into partnerships with local education agencies and businesses to improve K-12 science education. The key points of H.R. 1858 are:

- Establishes awards to institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations (research institutes or professional associations) that have entered into partnerships and businesses to improve K-12 science education.

- Authorized activities for partnerships: recruitment and training of science teachers in-service teacher professional development; educational technology training for teachers; distance learning programs teacher prep and certification for scientists; development of assessment tools for student performance; development of curricular materials for K-12 and undergrad science courses for pre-service teachers; developing math and science enrichment programs for students developing master teachers; providing research opportunities for teachers and students; and bringing scientists into the classroom.

- Establishes awards to institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations to provide research opportunities for K-12 science teachers at academic, industry or government labs. Authorized at $15M per year for 5 years.

- Expands the current program for K-12 science education activities, including dissemination of information on resources, materials and policies. Authorized at $20M per year for 5 years.

- Establishes 4 multidisciplinary centers for research on learning and educational improvement. The goal is to form collaborations among cognitive scientists, education researchers and education practitioners to improve classroom instruction in science and math. Authorized at $12M per year for 5 years.

- Establishes awards to institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations (research institutes or professional associations) to provide research opportunities related to the science of learning for K-12 science teachers. Authorized at $5M per year for 3 years.

- Reestablishes the scholarship program first authorized by the Excellence in Mathematics, Science, and Engineering Education Act of 1990. This new version of the program also provides 1 year stipends for holders of math, science and engineering degrees who wish to become certified as K-12 science teachers.

H.R. 100 authorizes science education activities at the National Science Foundation, as well as:

- Establishes a grant program for institutions of higher education to train master teachers and to assist K-12 schools to design and implement master teacher programs. Authorizes $50 million per year for three years.

- Requires NSF and the Department of Education to compile and disseminate to the schools information regarding academic courses high school students will require in college in order to prepare for careers as a science, math, engineering or technology teachers in elementary or secondary schools. Authorizes $5 million per year for three years.

- Requires NSF to fund a study by the National Academy of Sciences to evaluate the effectiveness of technology in the classroom on learning and student performance, as measured by state standardized tests. Authorizes $600,000.

- Requires NSF to convene an annual conference to identify and coordinate science, math, engineering and technology education activities of the government and private sector.

- Establishes a grant program for institutions of higher education to provide distance learning opportunities in math and science for K-12 students in which students can participate in research activities at the grantees' institutions via the Internet. Authorizes $5 million per year for three years.

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